DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 432 156 FL 025 917

AUTHOR	Garrott, Carl L.
TITLE	Resistance Strategies in the University Spanish Classroom.
PUB DATE	1999-07-20
NOTE	24p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Behavior Patterns; *Classroom Communication; Classroom Environment; College Instruction; College Students; Higher Education; *Resistance (Psychology); Second Language Learning; *Second Languages; *Spanish; *Student Behavior

ABSTRACT

A study investigated the different kinds of resistance techniques used by students in the college Spanish language classroom. Subjects were 30 undergraduate students, 10 at each of three instructional levels, representing a wide range of academic majors and concentrations. All completed a version of the Compliance-Resistance Techniques and Messages Survey. It was found that students with C and D grade averages used more resistance techniques than did students with A and B averages. The top resistance techniques were avoidance, priorities, and deceptions/excuses. Course level was not found to be related to resistance or non-compliance techniques used. Ten teaching techniques to counteract resistance are suggested, and areas for further study are identified. A list of resistance techniques is appended. (Contains 29 references.) (MSE)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 432 156

RESISTANCE STRATEGIES IN THE UNIVERSITY SPANISH CLASSROOM

By

Carl L. Garrott
Department of Languages and Literature
VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY
Petersburg, Virginia 23806

20 July 1999

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Carl L. Garrott
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

FL025917

RESISTANCE STRATEGIES IN THE UNIVERSITY SPANISH CLASSROOM

Classroom management and off-task behavior have been identified as major problems for first-year instructors at the secondary level (Arends, 1991; Elam, Lowell, Gallup, 1994). On the other hand, college and university professors are often perceived as less likely to have discipline problems. Such is not the case that student resistance and non-compliance to instructor and institutional codes of conduct do not occur at the university level. Burroughs, Kearney and Plax (1984) identified a series of compliance-resistance strategies employed by college students and classified these behaviors into typologies. Their research also divided resistance into destructive and constructive types. Destructive resistance was defined as disruptions to on-task behaviors: excessive talking during lectures, coming to class late, missing class, failing to turn in homework, sleeping during lectures, cheating, refusal to participate in discussions, and antagonism toward peers and/or instructors. On the other hand, constructive resistance may take the form of student withdrawals, complaints, correcting the instructor, challenging teacher opinion and collusion. Burroughs, Kearney and Plax (1984) posited that constructive resistance may lead potentially to meaningful discourse between instructor and student. The instructor may attend to student concerns about appropriate

classroom activities, learning disabilities, instructional strategies and downtime. On the other hand, destructive resistance positioned the classroom off-task. The amount of active time-on-task has long been associated with real academic engagement and higher achievement (Arends, 1991; Lieberman and Denham, 1980; McGarity and Butts, 1984; Woolfolk and McCune-Nicolich, 1984). Furthermore, Levin and Nolan (1996) explained that students who spend more time engaged and occupied by learning activities presented fewer management problems. It becomes axiomatic that good instruction and good classroom management are highly correlated. Yet, university Spanish instructors may still weather arguments, excuses, deception, absenteeism, challenges and rebuttals by students. Burroughs, Kearney and Plax (1984) reiterated that university students may rely upon a set of highly sophisticated techniques that undermine instructors' attempts at student compliance. The present investigation seeks to examine the categories of non-compliance or resistance strategies utilized by university students of elementary and intermediate Spanish using the Burroughs et al. (1989) typologies as a dependent variable with grade differences and course level as independent variables. Spanish instructors have a responsibility to see the relationship between on-task behavior and academic achievement, resistance techniques and achievement, management techinques and applied linguistics. The fields of foreign

language education and applied linguistics cannot survive when students are decidedly off-task because of non-compliance and resistance to classroom requirements.

Brief Review of Related Literature

Research is the formal application of methods to the study of problems. It has always been rather difficult to predict, illucidate and control situations involving human beings and even more difficult to generalize behavior patterns in a mixed group of late adolescents and adults. At any rate, educational and psychological research have contributed many reports and published articles specific to causes of maladaptive behavior and power in the classroom.

Dreikurs (1964); Dreikurs, Grundwald and Pepper (1982); Dreikurs and Bassel (1971) based their research and approach to classroom management upon the fact that individuals misbehave as the result of a lack of recognition: unacceptable behavior produces recognition, a feeling of belonging and self-worth. Dreikurs, Grunwald and Pepper (1982) categorized four maladaptive behaviors: (1) attention getting; (2) power seeking; (3) revenge seeking; and (4) displays of inadequacy. Each behavior followed a sequence if not rewarded. Dreikur's logical consequence approach purported to aim students toward taking

responsibility for their own behavior. Therefore, the instructor communicates to the student that he/she has potential to be successful and that good behavior reaps rewards. The instructor does not employ a series of moral judgments: criticism, lists of shortcomings, recounting past mis-behaviors; encouragement and positive feedback are accentuated.

William Glasser (1969, 1978, 1986) considered misbehavior as a direct function of the failure to satisfy student needs. Learning at a slower pace and obtaining less recognition and attention, some students retaliate upon the classroom through non-compliance with rules. Because these students feel trapped in an environment that negates their self-worth, students rebel. In his famous *Schools without Failure* (1969), Glasser posited his three questions to direct students toward good behavior: (1) What are you doing?; (2) Is it against the rules; (3) What should you be doing? Since many students may not answer honestly or not at all, a modern adaptattion uses statements that: (1) tell the student the nature of the misbehavior; (2) relate that the behavior is against the rules; and (3) recall the appropriate behavior.

Other clinical psychologists and counselors focused upon psychological and sociological causes of off-task behavior. Maladaptive classroom behavior has been linked to poverty, ethnic differences, lack of respect for traditional authority, television and violence, poor parenting, and

child abuse (Bouthilet and Lazar, 1982; Elliott and Voss, 1974; APA, 1993). The classroom teacher can attempt to seek counselors, psychologists and social workers to remedy deep personality problems, clinical psychosis and learning disabilities. Specialized interventions within a team of instructors, counselors, administrators, learning specialists and/or mental health professions may be the solution to self-management skills for the individual student with persistent problems (Arends, 1991).

Another research area of import to classroom management concerns "power in the classroom" This area of investigation began as a program to determine those coping strategies that instructors utilized to effect on-task behavior (Richmond, McCroskey, Kearney and Plax, 1987). French and Raven (1959) found that if consistent beliefs and behaviors by instructors were maintained, the instructor might be more successful. French and Raven (1959) also classified teacher power into five types: (1) referent; (2) expert; (3) legitimate; (4) reward; and (5) coercive. Power is, therefore, the capacity in real terms or the potential to influence others, or to resist influence from others. McCroskey and Richmond (1984) maintained that students cannot learn without the communication of power by the teacher.

Referent power derives from the fact that students like the instructor as a person or identifies with the person in authority. The student may

emulate his/her model. The instructor cares about student learning and requires a certain type of good comportment to keep student on-task.

Expert power derives from the student's perception of a teacher as a knowledgeable person capable of transmitting subject matter, capable of motivating learning and capable of explicating and simplifying complex problems and issues within the subject.

Legitimate power involves the fact that one follows orders of persons in authority. The instructor anticipates on-task behavior because of the teacher's authority to enforce control, rules and student responsible behavior. Often the instructor receives his/her authority from a combination of teacher-made rules and from the backing of the administration.

Reward signifies positive reinforcement to effect on-task behavior. Tangible or intangible rewards may entice students to remain on-task. Coercive power comprises a series of threats and punishments to compel students to remain on-task.

It must be noted that instructors use a variety of these power bases with different students and with different classes. Classroom teachers must take into account the need to motivate on-task behavior and emphasize the need for control, requirements and good behavior. There is a correlation between good classroom management and learning.

Another area of research linked to "power in the classroom" is

Behavior Alteration Techniques (BATS). Based upon the aforementioned French and Raven (1959), some results of these studies suggest:

1. Teacher perceptions of learning were less predictive than student perceptions (McCroskey and Richmond, 1983; Richmond and McCroskey, 1984).

2. A typology of 22 behavior alteration techniques with behavior alteration messages was empirically derived to represent messages and strategies instructors use to gain student student compliance after and before student resistance (Kearney, Plax, Richond and McCroskey, 1985).

3. McCroskey, Richmond, Plax and Kearney (1985) found that instructors receiving communication training produced more student learning. It was recommended that student perceptions be used in subsequent research using BATS (Behavior Alteration Techniques).

4. Plax, Kearney, McCroskey and Richmond (1986) found that BATs as perceived by students were associated with affective learning at the college and secondary levels. The use of verbal and nonverbal cues BATs were associated with learning and several categories of student compliance and resistance.

5. Richmond, McCroskey, Kearney and Plax (1987) reported that immediate reward, deferred reward, reward from others, self-esteem,

personal responsibility, responsibility to class, altruism, expert teacher and feedback were correlates of good prosocial teaching and cognitive learning. The following BATs were associated with poor teaching and less learning: punishment, guilt and teacher authority.

6. Wheeless, Stewart, Kearney and Plax (1987) studied differential reporting behaviors by externals and internals when instructors use BATs. This investigation reported that subjects with internal loci of control assumed authority, teacher-student relationships and teacher modeling; whereas, subjects with external loci of control had a set of constructs in which rewards, punishment, guilt, self-esteem, rules and peer modeling were "over-estimates" of instructor control attempts.

7. Allen and Edwards (1988) indicated that evaluators, teachers and students were highly intercorrelated in their perception of prosocial BATs; however, teachers and students might not agree in their perception of degree of BAT use.

Design of the Study

Statement of the Hypothesis

The problem of this study focuses on resistance dynamics in the Spanish or L2 classrom in which a series or typology of misbehaviors may occur. There is a paucity of research in L2 learning in which student resistance or oppositional behavior to any technique or method within applied linguistics occur. The field of classroom management abounds in compliance-gaining strategies specific to a student's propensity to resist or comply in a teacher-student passive linear model (Burroughs, Kearney and Plax, 1989). Research has identified various resistance messages employed by students and consequently destructive resistance to classroom decorum, in-class disruption and oppositional behavior have been examined in the research literture. It is reasonable to assume that instructor have a professional responsibility to adopt the role of the instructional leader who maximizes student on-task behavior. A discipline problem exists if individual or group behavior within the L2 classroom disrupts and/or interferes with teaching and learning (Levin and Nolan, 1996). The successful teacher learns to react to surface behaviors (verbal interruptions, physical movement and disrespect) and to employ proactive

coping skills.

The present investigation seeks to examine the categories of resistance techniques employed by university students in L2 classrooms (Spanish) using a modified Burroughs et al. (1989) typology as a dependent variable, and grade and course level as independent variables.

RQ: What are the resistance messages employed by University Spanish students in the L2 classroom using grade and course as antecedents?

Subjects

Subjects were 30 undergraduate students (10 subjects randomly selected from each course level) enrolled in elementary Spanish I and II, and intermediate Spanish I at a small regional Mid-Atlantic university. These courses constitute part of the general distribution of courses for liberal arts and science majors; therefore, students are representative of a wide array of majors and concentrations.

Subjects were informed by letter from the investigator that this study would not interfere with normal course assignments, laboratory sessions and testing. Furthermore, there would be no penalty for not participating in this investigation, and participation or non-participation

would not affect course grades. Responses would be anonymous; data and information collected were confidential. Access to all data was restricted directly to investigators involved in conducting the research.

Students were asked to complete a modified version of the Compliance-Resistance Techniques and Messages Survey (Burroughs, Kearney and Plax, 1989) in which only 10 typologies were used.

Data-gathering Instrument

In the pilot study, subjects were provided the original 19 typologies of Burroughs et al. (1989). Subjects (N=181) from seven classrooms (French and Spanish) were directed to indicate frequent compliance-resistance techniques by circling yes or no if he/she had ever used this technique in the L2 classroom or with the L2 instructor. This dichotomized response option conforms to the procedure used to measure behavior alteration techniques (Richmond, McCroskey, Kearney and Plax, 1987). The investigator reduced the 19 typologies to 10 (See Appendix). The 10-item inventory was administrered the first day of classes in SPA 102, 201 and 202. Subjects were asked to indicate behaviors in their previous university Spanish course. No subjects used secondary study and/or placement tests as prerequisites to their present course. High scores indicated greater frequency of the

behavior: scores ranged from 0 to 10. Subjects indicated previous course and grade at the end of the inventory.

Statistical Treatment and Analysis

Means were computed for each previous course (SPA 101, 102, 201) and each course dichotomy (A-B) and (C-D):

Table 1

Mean Number of Responses on the 10-item Resistance Technique Inventory

		Course Grade	
Course	N	A-B	C-D
101	10	2.2	5.2
102	10	2.8	6.4
201	10	2.2	5.6

The 2 X 3 analysis of variance indicated a significant grade effect, F (1,24)= 7.418, $p < .05$. The main effect for course was not significant at the .05 level, F (2,24)= 2.23; no significant interaction resulted,

F (2,24)= .020. Since the observed value of the test statistic, the F-ratio of the grade effect, exceeds the critical value of the .05 level of significance, the subjects within the course grade dichotomy (C-D) and (A-B) differ in their responses on the Resistance Technique Inventory.

Summary and Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to investigate the categories of non-compliance or resistance techniques employed by university Spanish students using a modified form of the Burroughs, Kearney and Plax Compliance-Resistance Techniques Inventory (1989). The modified 10-item Resistance Techniques Inventory was administered to 30 subjects in three levels of Spanish courses (SPA 101, 102 and 201) using grade dichotomy (A-B) and (C-D). Using a posttest only design, the 2 X 3 ANOVA indicated one significant main effect, grade; it was found that mean numbers of resistance techniques used by (C-D) subjects exceeded those of (A-B) subjects. The top three resistance techniques were respectively: avoidance, priorities and deception/excuses. Course level was found not to be related to resistanct/non-compliance techniques.

It is well known that the majority of students enrolled in L2 classrooms are not there because of an intrinsic need to learn languages but to fulfill the language requirement for the B.A. or B.S. program. Mantle-Bromley

and Miller, 1991) have said that secondary students are not motivated to learn another language; they are told that one or two years of FL study are recommended for college entrance. If one combines this situation with student maladaptive behavior or non-compliance to remain on-task, L2 pedagogy becomes a paradox. Furthermore, the results of this investigation suggests that there is a relationship between lower grades and resistance techniques among subjects in the sample. These results are hardly surprising due to the fact that students with lower grades often feel the sting of classroom assessment. Students are aware that instructors gather and analyze grades through homework, reports and test, and students may come to see themselves as failures or potential failures. Such students may also experience a high level of anxiety. Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) suggested that anxiety specific to language learning result in communication apprehension, text anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. Such students may have or feel they have lower language aptitude, lower native language skills, poor phonological skills and memory span. Couple these anxieties with the perception that the instructor maintains his/her social distance, employs a foreign socio-communicative style and gives confusing lectures, misbehavior or resistance may ensue. Students may be frequently tardy, inaccessible, sarcastic and disruptive.

Research in communication education, classroom management and language pedagogy prescribe:

1. Give more interesting lecture and/or demonstrations with clear directions and explanations (Wanzer and McCroskey, 1998).
2. Exhibit positive personality traits (Wanzer and McCroskey, 1998).
3. Make sure students understand evaluations.
4. Be able to communicate that one is aware of all activities in the classroom (Levin and Nolan, 1996).
5. Be able to detect inappropriate behavior and move toward the offender (Levin and Nolan, 1996).
6. Recognize disruptions that may escalate into major management problems (Kounin, 1970).
7. Exhibit confidence and conviction (Arends, 1991).
8. Use praise and reward (Allen and Edwards, 1988).
9. Change the pace of activities when one sees signs of boredom (Levin and Nolan, 1996).
10. Use appropriate volume of information; avoid too much material per course (Wanzer and McCroskey, 1998).

It must be noted that some limitations exist in this investigation: (1) the sample size is small and a larger sample may ensure greater

representativeness of the population and the normal distribution; (2) the inclusion of independent variables such as class size, gender, personality traits, learning style and previous high school study may facilitate the study of interactions among the categorizing variables. At any rate, the error variance would be substantially reduced.

Nevertheless, a study of this nature may prove useful to L2 teacher trainers, trainees and beginning instructors who need a knowledge of maladaptive behavior patterns in students. Intervention and management of behavior problems reduce instructional time and beginning L2 instructors must learn what to expect from students and how to deal with group and individual management. L2 teacher trainers must inform teaching assistants that students may subvert their authority and on-task activities in definite ways. Trainees and beginning students must be cognizant of the fact that a knowledge of applied linguistics and methodology may not suffice in the university L2 classroom when the instructor is insensitive to classroom management.

Further studies need to explore the influence of anxiety, student attitudes, motivation, learning styles, gender and personality as variables that promote off-task and disruptive behavior in L2 classrooms. Also, further research needs to be concerned with L2 teacher-student interactions where affect or antisocial behavior occur and/or interfere with learning. Last of all, the in-class problem of managing L2 courses

with large enrollments: maladaptive behavior by large numbers of students may overwhelm the instructor and destroy the learning environment.

APPENDIX :Resistance Techniques

Teacher Blame
The teacher is boring; I don't get anything out of it.

Avoidance
I will drop the class.
I will not go to class.
I will sit in the back of the room and not participate.

Reluctant Compliance
I will do only enough to get by.

Active Resistance
I will not come to class prepared.
I will leave my book at home.
I will continue to come to class unprepared and get on the teacher's nerves.

Deception/Excuses
I will make up lies about why I am always unprepared.
I will cheat off someone else.
I will pretend that I do not feel well.
I forgot and I am sorry.
My car broke down.

Direct Communication
I will go to the teacher's office and discuss my problems with him/her.
I will explain my behavior after class to the instructor.
I will tell the instructor how the class feels about him/her.

Disruption
I will be disruptive in class.
I will talk to friends while the instructor is lecturing.

Priorities
I have other homework so I am not prepared.
I have small children and I have little time to study.
I have a difficult major and this course has little to do with my major.
I have a very heavy class load.
This is only a general education course.
I don't need this grade anyway.

Appeal to Powerful Others
I will complain to the department head.
I will complain to my advisor.

Revenge
I will express my displeasure on the course evaluation.
I will not recommend this course to other students.
I will write a letter to be placed in the instructor's file.

Grade in last university Spanish course:_____
What was your last university Spanish course: _____

Sources Consulted

Allen, T. and Edwards, R. C. (1988). Evaluators' perceptions of teachers' use of Behavior Alteration Techniques. Communication Education, 37, 188-197.

APA. (1993). Violence and youth. vol 1. Washington, DC.

Arends, R. I. (1991). Learning to teach. New York: McGraw Hill.

Bouthilet, P. and Lazar, J. (Eds). (1982). Television and Behavior. Washington, DC: US Dept. of Health and Human

Burroughs, N. F.; Kearney, P. and Plax, T. G. (1989). Compliance-resistance in the college classroom. Communication Education, 38, 214-230.

Dreikurs, R. (1964). Children the challenge. New York: Hawthorn.

Dreikurs, R. and Bassel, P. (1971). Discipline without tears. New York: Hawthorn.

Dreikurs, R., Grundwald, B. and Pepper, F. (1982). Maintaining sanity in the classroom: Classroom management techniques. 2nd ed. New York: Harper and Row.

Elam, S. M., Lowell, C. R. and Gallup, A. M. (1994). The 26th annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup poll of the public's attitudes toward public schools. Phi Delta Kappan, 76, 1, 41-56.

Elliott, D. and Voss, H. (1974). Delinquency and dropout. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.

French, J. R. P., Jr., and Raven, B. H. (1959). The bases of social power. In D. Cartwright (Ed.), Studies in social power (pp. 150-167). Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Glasser, W. (1969). Schools without failures. New York: Harper and Row.

Glasser, W. (1978). Disorders in our schools: Causes and remedies. Phi Delta Kappan, 59, 5, 321-333.

Glasser, W. (1986). Control theory in the classroom. New York: Harper

and Row.

Horwitz, E., Horwitz, M., and Cope, J. (1986). Foreign language classroom anxiety. Modern Language Journal, 70, 125-132.

Kearney, P., Plax, T. G., Richmond, V.P., McCloskey, J. C. (1985). Power in the classroom III: Teacher communication techniques and messages. Communication Education, 34, 19-28.

Kounin, J. (1970). Discipline and group management in classrooms. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Levin, J. and Nolan, J. F. (1996). Classroom management. 2nd ed. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Lieberman, A. and Denham, C. (1980). Time to learn. Sacramento, CA: California Commission for Teacher Preparation and Licensing.

Mantle-Bromley, C. and Miller, R. B. (1991). Effect of multicultural lessons on attitudes of students of Spanish. Modern Language Journal, 75, 418-425.

McCroskey, J. C. and Richmond, V. P. (1983). Power in the classroom I: Teacher and student perceptions. Communication Education, 32, 175-184.

McCroskey, J. C., Richmond, V. P., Plax, T. G. and Kearney, P. (1985). Power in the classroom V: Behavior alteration techniques, communication training and learning. Communication Education, 34, 214-226.

McGarity, J. R. and Butts, D. P. (1984). The relationship among teacher classroom management behavior, student engagement, and student achievement of middle and high school science students of varying aptitude. Journal of Research in Scienc Teaching, 21, 55-61.

Plax, T. G., Kearney, P., and Downs, T. M. (1986). Communicating control in the classroom and satisfaction with teaching and students. Communication Education, 35, 379-388.

Richmond, V. P. and McCroskey, J. C. (1984). Power in the classroom II: Power and learning. Communication Education, 33, 125-136.

Richmond, V. P. and McCroskey, J. C., Kearney, P. and Plax, T. G. (1987). Power in the classroom VII: Linking behavior alteration

techniques to cognitive learning. Communication Education, 36, 1-12.

Wanzer, M. B. and McCroskey, J. c. (1998). Teacher socio-communicative style as a correlate of student affect toward teacher and course material. Communication Education, 47, 43-52.

Wheeless, L. R., Stewart, R. A., Kearney, P. and Plax, T. G. (1987). Locus of control and personal constructs in students' reactions to teacher compliance attempts: A reassessment. Communication Education, 36, 250-258.

Woolfol, A. E. and McClure-Nicolich, L. (1984). Educational Psychology for Teachers 2nd ed. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.